

## Concerning the excellent properties of the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*].

Let us now consider the significance of the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

Behold, We sent it down  
on the Night of Power.

*innā anzalnā-hu  
fī Lailati 'l-Qadr.*

And what has made you know  
what is the Night of Power?

*wa mā adrā-ka  
mā Lailatu 'l-Qadr.*

The Night of Power is better  
than a thousand months.

*Lailatu 'l-Qadri khairun  
min alfi shahr.*

In it the angels  
and the Spirit come down  
by their Lord's permission,  
on every errand.

*tanazzalu 'l-malā' ikatu  
wa 'r-Rūhu fī-hā  
bi-idhni Rabbi-him  
min kulli amr.*

Peace it is, until  
the rising of the of dawn. (97:1–5)

*salāmun hiya  
ḥattā maṭla' i 'l-fajr.*

First of all, we should note that the object pronoun *-hu* [it] in *anzalnā-hu* [We sent it down] is an allusion to the Qur'ān. Allāh (Exalted is He) sent it down from the Well-Kept Tablet [*al-Lawḥ al-Mahfūz*] to the heaven of this lower world—to the Scribes [*as-Safara*], they being the clerks or secretaries among the angels. It would thus come down on that particular night, from the Tablet, to the extent that Gabriel (peace be upon him) was to reveal it—with the permission of Allāh (Exalted is He)—to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in the course of the whole year. The same procedure would then be applied in each subsequent year, until the entire Qur'ān had come down, on the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] in the month of Ramaḍān, to the heaven of this lower world.

Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was offering an interpretation also proposed by other authorities, when

he gave the following commentary on:

Behold, We sent it down  
on the Night of Power. (97:1) *innā anzalnā-hu  
fi Lailati 'l-Qadr.*

“This means: ‘We sent Gabriel down with this Sūra, and with the whole of the Qur’ān—on the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*—to the recording angels. Then it came down after that, by installments [*najman najmā*], to Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace)—during a period of twenty-three years, and in all the months, days, nights, and moments of time.”

As for His statement (Exalted is He):

on the Night of Power. *fi Lailati 'l-Qadr.*

—this means: “on a tremendous or stupendous night [*laila ‘aẓīma*],” or, as some have maintained: “on the Night of the Divine Decree [*Lailat al-Hukm*].” It is called the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] in order to proclaim the immensity of the night itself, and to emphasize its potency [*qadr*], because it is then that Allāh (Exalted is He) predetermines [*yuqaddiru*] how things are to be throughout the year, until the same night of the year that lies ahead.

Then He has said (Exalted is He):

And what has made you know  
what is the Night of Power? (97:2) *wa mā adrā-ka  
mā Lailatu 'l-Qadr.*

In other words: “O Muḥammad, if it were not for the fact that Allāh has made you realize its tremendous importance, [how could you have known]?” For the fact is that, in every instance where the question posed in the Qur’ān is in the past tense—“and what has made you know [*wa mā adrā-ka*]?”—Allāh had already imparted the relevant knowledge to him. On the other hand, whenever the question posed therein is in the future tense—“and what will make you know [*wa mā yudrī-ka*]?”—the implication is that He had not let him know, and had not imparted the relevant knowledge to him. For example, consider His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), so he was asked: “and what will make you know [*wa mā yudrī-ka*] ?” rather than: “and what has made you know [*wa mā adrā-ka*]?”

The following point should also be noted, concerning the night which He has described (Exalted is He) as “the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*],” that is to say, the Night of Sublime Majesty and Wisdom [*Lailat al-‘Azama wa ‘l-Hikma*]: According to some authorities, this is the blessed night referred to in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

We sent it down on a blessed night...	<i>innā anzalnā-hu fī lailatin</i>
in which every firm decree	<i>mubārakatin... fī-hā yufraqu</i>
is made distinct. (44:3,4)	<i>kullu amrin ḥakīm.</i>

Next, He has said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

The Night of Power is better	<i>Lailatu ‘l-Qadri khairun</i>
than a thousand months. (97:3)	<i>min alfi shahr.</i>

In other words, good deeds therein are better than [those performed in] a thousand months that are without a Night of Power.

It is said of the Companions [*Ṣaḥāba*] (may Allāh be well pleased with them) that they never felt so happy about anything, as they felt about His words (Exalted is He): “better than a thousand months [*khairun min alfi shahr*].” The story behind this goes as follows:

One day, Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was telling his Companions about four of the Children of Israel [*Banī Isrā’īl*], and how they worshipfully served Allāh for eighty years, without disobeying Him for one single twinkling of an eye in all of that time. The four he spoke about were Job [*Ayyūb*],<sup>200</sup> Zacharias [*Zakariyyā*],<sup>201</sup> Ezekiel [*Ḥizqīl*],<sup>202</sup> and Joshua the son of Nūn<sup>203</sup> [*Yūsha‘ ibn Nūn*] (peace be upon them all).



The Companions of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) were greatly amazed at all of this, so Gabriel (peace be upon him) came to him and said: "O Muḥammad, it seems to have come as a great surprise to you and your Companions, to learn that these individuals were devoted to worshipful service for eighty years, without disobeying Allāh (Exalted is He) for one single twinkling of an eye in all of that time. So now Allāh has sent down to you something even better than that!" Then he recited to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

Behold, We sent it down on the Night of Power.	<i>innā anzalnā-hu fī Lailati 'l-Qadr.</i>
And what has made you know what is the Night of Power?	<i>wa mā adrā-ka mā Lailatu 'l-Qadr.</i>
The Night of Power is better than a thousand months.	<i>Lailatu 'l-Qadri khairun min alfi shahr.</i>
In it the angels and the Spirit come down by their Lord's permission, on every errand.	<i>tanazzalu 'l-malā' ikatu wa 'r-Rūḥu fī-hā bi-idhni Rabbi-him min kulli amr.</i>
Peace it is, until the rising of the of dawn. (97:1-5)	<i>salāmun hiya ḥattā maṭla' i 'l-fajr.</i>

Gabriel (peace be upon him) then said to him: "This is even more excellent than that which you and your Companions found so amazing." Needless to say, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was highly delighted.

It was Yaḥyā ibn Najīḥ who said: "Once upon a time, among the Children of Israel [*Banī Isrā'īl*], there was a man who carried a weapon for a thousand months in the service of Allāh's cause [*fī sabīli 'llāh*], and not once in all of that time did he set his weapon aside. Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) mentioned this to his Companions, and they found the story quite amazing. So it was then that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) sent down the revelation:

The Night of Power is better than a thousand months. (97:3)	<i>Lailatu 'l-Qadri khairun min alfi shahr.</i>
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—meaning: 'better than those thousand months, during which that man bore a weapon in the service of Allāh's cause [*fī sabīli 'llāh*], and never once set his weapon aside.'

“As for the name by which the man was known among the Children of Israel [*Banī Isrāʾīl*], some say it was Simon the Worshipful Servant [*Shamʿūn al-ʿĀbid*], while others say it was Samson [*Shamsūn*].”

Let us now consider the significance of each element in His saying (Exalted is He):

In it the angels  
and the Spirit come down  
by their Lord's permission,  
on every errand.

*tanazzalu 'l-malā'ikatu  
wa 'r-Rūḥu fī-hā  
bi-idhni Rabbi-him  
min kulli amr.*

Peace it is, until  
the rising of the of dawn. (97:4,5)

*salāmun hiya  
ḥattā maṭlaʿi 'l-fajr.*

1. What is meant by “the angels come down [*tanazzalu 'l-malā'ikatu*]” is that they come down in succession, from the setting of the sun until the the rising of the of dawn.

2. “The Spirit [*ar-Rūḥ*]” means Gabriel (peace be upon him).

According to aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk, it was Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who said: “The Spirit [*ar-Rūḥ*] is in the shape of a human being with a gigantic physical build, and he is the one to whom Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) was referring when He said:

And they will ask you  
about the Spirit. (17:85)

*wa yasʿalūna-ka  
ʿani 'r-Rūḥ.*

“He is the angel who will stand in the company of the angels, when they line up in rows on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*], but in a rank by himself.”

According to al-Muqātil: “He is the most noble of all the angels in the sight of Allāh (Exalted is He).”

Someone else has said: “He is an angel whose face is shaped like that of a human being, while his body is the body of the angels. He is the most enormous creature in the presence of the Heavenly Throne [*ʿArsh*], so he will stand in a row all by himself, when the angels stand arrayed.” The last part of this statement is, of course, a reference to the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

On the day when the Spirit  
and the angels stand arrayed. (78:38)

*yawma yaqūmu 'r-Rūḥu  
wa 'l-malā'ikatu ṣaffā.*



3. "In it [*fī-hā*]" simply means: "in the Night of Power [*fī Lailat al-Qadr*]."
4. "By their Lord's permission [*bi-idhni Rabbi-him*]" means, in effect: "by their Lord's command [*bi-amri Rabbi-him*]."
5. "On every errand [*min kulli amr*]" is a way of saying: "for every good purpose."
6. "Peace it is [*salāmun hiya*]" has exactly the same meaning as: "It is peace [*hiya salāmun*]," which signifies that it is perfectly safe and salubrious [*salīma*]. No sickness or disease can break out in the course of it, nor can it be disturbed by any kind of hocus-pocus [*kahāna*].  
It has also been maintained that "*salāmun* [peace]" means the greeting of peace, with which the angels salute the true believers [*salāmu 'l-mala'ikati 'ala 'l-mu'minīn*] among the people of the earth, for they say to them: "Peace, peace, until the rising of the dawn [*salāmun salāmun ḥattā maṭla' i 'l-fajr*]!"
7. As for the phrase "until the rising of the dawn [*ḥattā maṭla' i 'l-fajr*]," we should note the existence of an alternative reading for the Arabic word *maṭla'*. By substituting the vowel *-i-* for the vowel *-a-* after the consonant *-l-*,<sup>204</sup> we arrive at the form *maṭli'*.<sup>205</sup> The *maṭli'* of the dawn means the rising [*al-ṭulū'*] thereof, while *maṭla'* denotes the place or point at which it rises [*yaṭlu' u*].<sup>206</sup>

## On the fact that the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] should be looked for during the last ten days of the month of Ramaḍān.

**T**he Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] should be looked for during the last ten days of the month of Ramaḍān, and it is most likely to be the night of the twenty-seventh.

According to the doctrine of Imām Mālik<sup>207</sup> (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), however, all the nights of the last ten days are equal candidates, and none of them is more probable than any other.

According to the doctrine of Imām ash-Shāfi'ī<sup>208</sup> (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), on the other hand, the most likely candidate is the twenty-first.

Some have maintained that it is the night of the nineteenth, this being the doctrine of 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

Abū Burda al-Aslamī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), is known to have said: "It is the night of the twenty-third."

Abū Dharr<sup>209</sup> and al-Ḥasan (may Allāh be well pleased with them) are both known to have said: "It is the night of the twenty-fifth."

According to a traditional report attributed to Bilāl (may Allāh be well pleased with him),<sup>210</sup> the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said: "It is the night of the twenty-fourth."

Ibn 'Abbās and Ubayy ibn Ka'b<sup>211</sup> (may Allāh be well pleased with

them) are both known to have said: “It is the night of the twenty-seventh.”

The strongest evidence in favor of the conclusion that the most likely candidate is the night of the twenty-seventh—although Allāh knows best [*wa'llāhu A'lam*]<sup>212</sup>—has been presented by Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him). Citing an authoritative chain of transmission [*isnād*], the Imām reports that Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said:

“It seemed that people would never stop telling the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) about how, in their dreams, they had seen which of the last ten nights was the Night. So the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) eventually declared: “As I cannot help but notice, your dreams repeatedly suggest that it is one of the odd-numbered nights among the final ten. If anyone is really keen to investigate, let him focus his research on the seventh night of the final ten.”

Ibn 'Abbās is reported as having said to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with them):

“I made a careful study of all the uneven numbers [*afrād*], and I had to conclude that none was more worthy of note than the number seven [*as-sab'a*].”

To demonstrate the special significance of the number seven, we shall now repeat what a certain learned scholar had to say on the subject:

“There are seven heavens, and there are seven earths.

“There are seven nights [in a week].

“There are seven celestial spheres [*aflāk*], and there are seven constellations [*nujūm*].

“There are seven laps to be covered at a brisk pace [*sa'y*] between [the small hills] of aṣ-Ṣafā and al-Marwa.<sup>213</sup>

“There are seven circuits to be performed in the circumambulation [*ṭawāf*] of the House [of Allāh].<sup>214</sup>



“There are seven ingredients in the physical constitution of a human being, seven ingredients in his basic diet, and seven slits or cavities in the surface of his face.

“There are seven seals [*khawāṭim*].<sup>215</sup>

“There are seven verses [*āyāt*] in the Sūra of Praise [*Sūrat al-Ḥamd*].<sup>216</sup>

“There are seven modes [*aḥruf*] of reciting the Qur’ān.<sup>217</sup>

“There are seven oft-repeated verses [*as-sab‘u ’l-mathānī*].<sup>218</sup>

“In the act of prostration [*sujūd*] during the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], seven parts of the body are brought into contact with the ground.

“There are seven gates of Hell [*Jahannam*], and Hell has seven names, corresponding to its seven descending steps or levels [*darakāt*].<sup>219</sup>

“There were seven Companions of the Cave [*Aṣḥāb al-Kahf*].<sup>220</sup>

“In the course of seven nights, the tribe of ‘Ād was annihilated by the wind.<sup>221</sup>

“For seven years, Joseph [*Yūsuf*] (peace be upon him) remained in prison.

“There were [two sets of] seven cows [*baqarāt*] in the dream of the king

of Egypt, as mentioned by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) in the Sūra of Joseph [*Sūrat Yūsuf*]:

And the king said: "I saw in a dream seven fat cows, and seven lean ones devouring them." (12:43)	<i>wa qāla 'l-maliku innī arā sab' a baqarātin simānin ya'kulu-hunna sab'un 'ijāfun.</i>
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"There would be seven years of drought, and then seven years of plenty, according to the prediction made by Joseph [*Yūsuf*] (peace be upon him).

"There are seventeen cycles [*rak'a*], all told, in the five daily prayers [*ṣalawāt*].<sup>222</sup>

"The number seven is mentioned in the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Then a fast of three days while on the Pilgrimage, and of seven when you have returned. (2:196)	<i>fa-ṣiyāmu thalāthati ayyāmin fi 'l-Ḥajji wa sab' atin idhā raja' tum.</i>
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"There are seven degrees of relationship by blood [*nasab*] within which it is unlawful to marry.<sup>223</sup>

"There are seven degrees of relationship by fosterage [*riḍā'*] and marriage [*ṣihr*], within which it is likewise unlawful to marry.<sup>224</sup>

"Before they can be considered pure and fit for human use, food containers in which dogs have lapped must be washed and scrubbed seven times, including one scrubbing with dry earth. Such is the rule laid down by Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

"There are twenty-seven Arabic 'words' [*ḥurūf*]<sup>225</sup> in the Sūra of Power



[*Sūrat al-Qadr*], up to but not including the verse [*āya*]: 'Peace it is [*salāmun hiya*]....'<sup>226</sup>

"Job [*Ayyūb*] (peace be upon him) endured trial and tribulation for seven years.

"'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said: 'Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) married me when I was seven years of age.'

"There are seven 'days of the old hag' [*ayyām al-'ajūz*], i.e., of the destructive wind [*husūm*]: three in February [*Shubāt*] and four in March [*Ādhār*].<sup>227</sup>

"Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

The martyrs [*shuhadā'*] of my Community [*Ummatī*] are seven, namely: (1) one who is killed in battle, while fighting for the cause of Allāh [*al-qatīl fī sabīlī' llāh*]; (2) the victim of the plague [*al-maṭ'ūn*]; (3) the victim of pulmonary tuberculosis [*al-maslūl*]; (4) one whose death is caused by drowning [*al-ghariq*]; (5) one who is trapped in a fire and burned to death [*al-hāriq*]; (6) one whose death results from a gastric or intestinal ailment [*al-mabṭūn*]; (7) the woman who dies in the process of childbirth [*an-nafsā'*].

"Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) swore [*aqṣama*] by seven things, when He said, in the first seven verses of the Sūra of the Sun [*Sūrat ash-Shams*] (91:1-7):

- |   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. By the sun and its brightness,       | wa 'sh-shamsi wa ḍuhā-hā    |
| 2. and the moon when she follows him,   | wa 'l-qamari idhā talā-hā   |
| 3. and the day when it reveals him,     | wa 'n-nahāri idhā jallā-hā  |
| 4. and the night when it enshrouds him, | wa 'l-laili idhā yaghshā-hā |
| 5. and the heaven and Him who built it, | wa 's-samā' i wa mā banā-hā |
| 6. and the earth and Him who spread it, | wa 'l-arḍi wa mā ṭahā-hā    |
| 7. and a soul and Him who perfected it. | wa nafsin wa mā sawwāhā.    |

"Moses [*Mūsā*] (peace be upon him) stood seven cubits tall, and the length of the staff of Moses was also seven cubits.

“It is thus established that most things [of great religious importance] are associated with the number seven. This means that Allāh (Exalted is He) has implicitly indicated to His servants that the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] is the twenty-seventh, by virtue of His statement:

Peace it is, until	<i>salāmun hiya</i>
the rising of the of dawn. (97:5)	<i>ḥattā maṭla‘i ‘l-fajr.</i>

“He has thereby given us to understand that the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] is the night of the twenty-seventh [of the month of Ramaḍān].”<sup>228</sup>



**On the conflicting opinions of various experts  
concerning the correct answer to the question:  
“Which is more excellent, the night of the Day  
of Congregational Prayer [*Lailat al-Jum‘a*],  
or the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*]?”**

**W**hich is more excellent, the night of the Day of Congregational Prayer [*Lailat al-Jum‘a*],<sup>229</sup> or the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*]? This is a question over which our fellow scholars<sup>230</sup> have been in some disagreement.

On the one hand, Shaikh Abū ‘Abdi’llāh ibn Baṭṭa, Shaikh Abu ‘l-Ḥasan al-Jazarī and Abū Ḥafṣ ‘Umar al-Barmakī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them) have all opted for the answer that the night of the Day of Congregational Prayer [*Lailat al-Jum‘a*] is the more excellent of the two.

On the other hand, the answer preferred by Abu ‘l-Ḥasan at-Tamīmī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is that, of all the Nights of Power [*Layālī ‘l-Qadr*], only one is more excellent than the night of the Day of Congregational Prayer [*Lailat al-Jum‘a*], namely, the actual Night during which the Qur’ān was sent down. As for all the otherwise similar Nights of Power [*Layālī ‘l-Qadr*], the night of the Day of Congregational Prayer [*Lailat al-Jum‘a*] ranks higher than any of them on the scale of excellence.

[Aside from these representatives of the Ḥanbalī school] most of the learned scholars [*‘ulamā’*] have maintained that the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] is more excellent, not only than the night of the Day of Congregational Prayer [*Lailat al-Jum‘a*], but than all other nights in the calendar.

There is plenty of traditional evidence, however, to justify the point of view adopted by our Ḥanbalī colleagues, as we shall demonstrate:

According to one traditional account, related by al-Qāḍī [the Judge] al-Imām Abū Ya'la (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), it was Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who reported that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:<sup>231</sup>

Allāh grants forgiveness, on the night of the Day of Congregational Prayer [*Lailat al-Jum'a*], to all the people of Islām.

No comparable excellence is known to have been attributed by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to any of the other nights.

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is also reported as having said:

Invoke Allāh's blessing upon me,<sup>232</sup> many times over, in the course of the illustrious night [*al-lailat al-gharrā'*], and during the brightly shining day [*al-yawm al-aẓhar*]<sup>233</sup>—on the night of the Day of Congregational Prayer [*Lailat al-Jum'a*], and then on the Day itself.

The adjective *gharrā'* [illustrious] is related to the noun *ghurra*, which means the highlight, the prime, the finest feature of something.<sup>233</sup>

Another point in favor of the superior excellence of the night of the Day of Congregational Prayer [*Lailat al-Jum'a*] is the very fact that it immediately precedes the Day itself. This is indeed a telling point, because we have been taught so much about the excellence of that Day, and so little about the excellence of the day of the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*].

The following traditional reports are highly significant in this connection:

According to Anas [ibn Mālik]<sup>234</sup> (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

The sun never rises to usher in a day that is more splendid, in the sight of Allāh, than the Day of Congregational Prayer [*Yawm al-Jum'a*], and none is dearer to Him.



According to Abū Huraira<sup>235</sup> (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

The sun never rises, nor does it ever set, upon a day that is more excellent than the Day of Congregational Prayer [*Yawm al-Jum'a*]. There is no creature that walks or crawls upon the earth, that is not terrified of the Day of Congregational Prayer [*Yawm al-Jum'a*], apart from these two species [*thaqalayn*]: the jinn and human beings.

According to another report from Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

On the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*], Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will resurrect the days in a manner that displays their condition. When He brings forth the Day of Congregational Prayer [*al-Jum'a*], it will be shining with a radiant beauty, and its own people will greet it with affectionate respect, as if it were a bride being led in procession to her noble bridegroom, beaming upon them as they walk in her radiance. Their complexions will be like snow, and their fragrant aroma will be like musk. They will plunge into mountains of camphor, and the people assembled at the Place of Standing [*al-Mawqif*], humans and jinn alike, will stare at them in wonder, too fascinated to blink an eye, until they enter the Garden of Paradise.

Suppose someone were to say: "That all sounds very convincing, no doubt, but what is your response to His saying (Almighty and Glorious is He):

The Night of Power is better  
than a thousand months. (97:3)?"

*Lailatu 'l-Qadri khairum  
min alfi shahr.*

To this our reply would be as follows: "What is meant to be understood by it is: "better than a thousand months—in the reckoning of which the night of the Day of Congregational Prayer [*Lailat al-Jum'a*] is not included." This interpretation should be perfectly comprehensible even to those who prefer the other point of view, since their understanding of the phrase is: "better than a thousand months—in the reckoning of which the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] is not included."<sup>236</sup>

In defense of our point of view, we should also point out that the night of the Day of Congregational Prayer [*Lailat al-Jum'a*] is everlasting in the Garden of Paradise—because visiting with Allāh (Glorified and Exalted is He) takes place during the Day thereof.<sup>237</sup> Furthermore, its

position in the calendar is known for certain here in this lower world,<sup>238</sup> whereas the exact date of the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] can only be surmised.

It must be admitted, notwithstanding, that a case can be made in favor of the view preferred by at-Tamīmī and some other learned scholars.<sup>239</sup> When they maintain that the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] is more excellent than any other night, they begin by citing the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

The Night of Power is better  
than a thousand months. (97:3)

*Lailatu 'l-Qadri khairun  
min alfi shahr.*

Then, having noted the fact that a thousand months are the equivalent of eighty-three years and four months,<sup>240</sup> they cite the following traditional reports:<sup>241</sup>

It said that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was shown the life spans of the members of his Community [*Umma*], and he considered them too short, so he was granted the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*].

Imām Mālik ibn Anas<sup>242</sup> (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said: "I have heard, from someone whose word I trust, that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once saw the life spans of all the people before his own time, or as much of that as Allāh (Exalted is He) wished him to see. In this vision, it seemed to him that the life spans of those belonging to his own Community [*Umma*] had become shorter by comparison, with the result that they could not accomplish as much good work, in the course of a lifetime, as others who had preceded them. It was then that Allāh granted him the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*], which is better than a thousand months."



Imām Mālik ibn Anas (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) also said: “It has come to my attention that Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyib<sup>243</sup> once said: ‘If someone is present at the late evening prayer [*ṣalāt al-‘ishā’*] on the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*], he will derive good fortune therefrom.’

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

If someone performs both the late evening [*‘ishā’*] and sunset [*maghrib*] prayers in congregation, he will obtain his share of good fortune from the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*]. Moreover, if he recites it—meaning the Sūra of Power [*Sūrat al-Qadr*—it will be as if he had recited one fourth of the entire Qur’ān.<sup>244</sup>

**On the answer to the question: “Why has Allāh not informed His servants of an exact date, on which the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] is certain to occur?”**

Suppose someone raises the question: “Why has Allāh not informed His servants of an exact date, on which the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] is certain to occur, just as He has provided them with precise and unambiguous information concerning the night of the Day of Congregational Prayer [*Lailat al-Jum‘a*]?”

The appropriate response will be to tell the questioner: “His purpose (Exalted is He) is to make sure that His servants do not take it for granted that they have performed good deeds on that particular night. Were it not for this element of uncertainty, they could make the claim: ‘We have performed good deeds on a night that is better than a thousand months, so Allāh has granted us forgiveness, and in His sight we are now entitled to spiritual degrees and Gardens of Paradise.’ They might therefore abandon all further effort to do good works, and simply rest on their laurels. Having thus fallen prey to unduly optimistic expectation, they would then be doomed to perdition.”

It should also be noted that, as a similar measure of precaution, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has refrained from informing His servants as to when their individual lifetimes are due to expire. Were it not so, a person with a long life still ahead of him could say: “I intend to give free rein to my carnal desires, indulging in all the pleasures this world has to offer, and enjoying its comforts to the full. Eventually, of course, when the expiration of my term draws near, I shall repent and devote myself to the worshipful service of my Lord. I shall then die as a penitent and reformed character.”

In actual fact, Allāh (Exalted is He) has kept their appointed terms concealed from them, so they must always be cautious and wary of

death. Under these circumstances, they have a permanent incentive to practice good conduct, to pursue repentance with diligent perseverance, and to make constant efforts to improve their behavior. Death, whenever it comes to claim them, will therefore find them in a very good spiritual state. As well as receiving their allotted shares [*aqsām*] of pleasure and sensual enjoyment in this world, they will be safely delivered from Allāh's torment in the hereafter, by the mercy [*rahma*] of Allāh (Exalted is He).

The following anonymous saying is also worth quoting:

“Allāh (Exalted is He) has concealed five things inside five: (1) He has concealed Allāh's good pleasure inside worshipful acts of obedience [*ṭā'āt*]; (2) He has concealed His wrath inside sinful acts of disobedience [*ma'āṣī*]; (3) He has concealed the middle prayer [*aṣ-ṣalāt al-wuṣṭā*] <sup>245</sup> among the other ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt*]; (4) He has concealed His saintly friend [*walī*] among the rest of His creatures; (5) He has concealed the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] within the month of Ramaḍān.”



## On the characteristic features that indicate the arrival of the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*].

As for the characteristic features that indicate the arrival of the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*], they are present in a night when the atmosphere is comfortable, the sky is jet-black, and the temperature is neither hot nor cold. We may also quote this anonymous saying on the subject:

“It is a night in which no barking of dogs can be heard. When the sun rises on the following morning, it appears as a disk without rays, rather like a copper bowl [*ṭast*].”

As for the marvels and wonders of the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*], they are revealed to those who possess the qualities of spiritual development and sainthood [*arbāb al-qulūb wa 'l-wilāya*], to those who are committed to worshipful obedience [*ahl aṭ-ṭā'a*], and to whomever Allāh wishes among those of His servants who are true believers [*mu'minīn*]<sup>—</sup>in accordance with their spiritual states [*aḥwāl*], their allotted portions [*aqsām*], and their degrees of nearness to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

## Some concluding remarks concerning the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*], and concerning the month of Ramadān as a whole.

**O**n the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*], as Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

The angels and the Spirit  
come down. (97:4)

*tanazzalu 'l-malā'ikatu  
wa 'r-Rūḥ.*

In other words, Gabriel (peace be upon him), who is the Spirit [*Rūḥ*], comes down with an escort of seventy thousand angels, whom he leads as their commanding officer [*amīr*].

Once they have descended from heaven to the earth below, Gabriel (peace be upon him) will give the greeting of peace to anyone who happens to be in a sitting posture, while the angels will give the greeting of peace to anyone who happens to be sleeping. At the same time, the Maker [*al-Bārī*] (Glorified and Exalted is He) will bestow the salutation of peace upon those of His servants who are standing upright.

It is certainly possible to conceive that Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will bestow the salutation of peace upon those believing servants of His [*'ibādi-hi 'l-mu' minīn*] who are worthy to inhabit the Garden of Paradise, for He has indicated that He will say to them, within the confines of the Garden:

"Peace!"—such is the greeting  
from a Lord All-Compassionate.  
(36:58)

*salām: qawlan min  
Rabbīn Raḥīm.*

By the same token, it is also conceivable that He will bestow the salutation of peace, here in this lower world, upon those righteous servants of His [*'ibādi-hi 'l-abrār*]:

unto whom the reward most fair  
has already gone forth from Us.  
(21:101)

*alladhīna sabaqat la-hum  
min-na 'l-ḥusnā.*



In other words, it is conceivable because the blessings of providence [*'ināya*] and felicity [*sa'āda*] have already been conferred by Him, in the eternity without beginning [*fi 'l-azal*], upon those who are extinct to the creation [*fānīn 'ani 'l-khalq*], existing in perpetuity with the Lord [*bāqīn bi'r-Rabb*], and steadfastly reliant on the Truth [*muṭma'inīn ila 'l-Haqq*].

When the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] comes around, there will not be a single spot on earth that does not have an angel upon it, either bowing down in prostration, or standing erect, as he offers prayers of supplication on behalf of the believing men [*mu'minīn*] and the believing women [*mu'mināt*]. There will be no exceptions, apart from any church [*kanīsa*], or any synagogue [*bī'a*],<sup>276</sup> or any temple dedicated to the worship of fire, or any temple dedicated to the worship of idols, or certain places where people dispose of their filthy trash.

Those angels will dedicate every moment of their night on earth to offering prayers of supplication on behalf of the believing men [*mu'minīn*] and the believing women [*mu'mināt*]. As for Gabriel (peace be upon him), he will not leave any believer, male or female, without giving him [or her] the greeting of peace and shaking him [or her] by the hand. To each and every one of them, he will say: "If you are in a state of worshipful obedience, peace be upon you, in the form of the approval and favor you deserve! If you are in a state of sinful disobedience, peace be upon you, in the form of forgiveness! If you are in a state of sleep, peace be upon you, in the form of contentment! If you are in the grave or tomb, peace be upon you, in the form of refreshment [*rauh*] and sweet perfume [*raiḥān*]!"

This, according to one interpretation, is the import of the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

On every errand: Peace....  
(97:4,5)

*min kulli amr—salāmun....*

Another interpretation has been expressed as follows:

"The angels will surely convey the greeting of peace to all worthy practitioners of worshipful obedience, but they will not offer that same



salutation to all who are guilty of sinful disobedience, for some of them are perpetrators of heinous wrongdoing and injustice [*ẓalama*], who deserve no share in the peace conveyed by the angels. Grievous indeed is the offense committed by the consumer of unlawful sustenance [*ākil al-ḥarām*], the breaker of family ties [*qāṭi' ar-riḥm*], the spreader of malicious gossip and slander [*namām*], and the consumer of goods that rightfully belong to orphans [*ākil amwāl al-yatāmā*]. The likes of these are therefore not entitled to any share in the peace conveyed by the angels, and none shall they receive.”

What calamity could be worse than this terrible disaster? What a dreadful affliction it must be, to live through a month—the beginning of which is a mercy, the middle of which is a forgiveness, and the last part of which is a deliverance from the Fire of Hell<sup>277</sup>—and yet find yourself excluded from sharing in the peace conveyed therein by the angels of the Lord of the sinners and the righteous [*Rabb al- 'uṣāt wa 'l-abrār*]!

What could have brought this affliction upon you? Was it due to your remoteness from the All-Merciful One [*ar-Raḥmān*], to your being an agent of tyranny [*aṭ-ṭughyān*] and a willing accomplice of the Devil [*ash-Shaiṭān*], and to your having adopted the flamboyant style of those who tread the path that leads to the Fires of Hell [*an-nīrān*]? Was it due to your remoteness and aloofness from those who tread the path that leads to the Gardens of Paradise [*al-jinān*], and your extreme reluctance to obey the One who controls both the infliction of harm and the bestowal of benefit [*al-iḥsān*]?

The month of Ramaḍān is the month of serenity and purity [*shahr aṣ-ṣafā'*], the month of fulfillment and fidelity [*shahr al-wafā'*]. It is the month of those who practice the remembrance of their Lord [*shahr adh-dhākirīn*], the month of those who endure with patience [*shahr aṣ-ṣābirīn*], and the month of those who are honest and truthful [*shahr aṣ-ṣādiqīn*]. So, if it does not have the effect of improving your heart—if it does not induce you to desist from rebellious acts against your Lord, and does not make you avoid the company of troublemakers and criminals—what else can exert a positive influence on your heart? What goodness can be hoped for in a case like yours? What redeeming quality can survive in someone like you? What successful outcome can be expected from an individual like you?

You had better pay attention, O miserable wretch, and try to learn from what has happened to you. Come to your senses, wake up from your slumber, shake off your heedless indifference, and take a good hard look at what has befallen you. However little of the month you still have left, you must seize every opportunity for repentance [*tawba*] and contrition [*ināba*].<sup>278</sup> Take full advantage of the time that is still available for seeking forgiveness [*istighfār*] and practicing worshipful obedience [*ṭāʿa*]. If you follow this advice, you may yet be one of those who receive the blessings of mercy [*rahma*] and compassionate grace [*raʿfa*].

Then, when the month of Ramaḍān comes to its close, you should bid it farewell with the shedding of copious tears. You should weep over your unfortunate self, while moaning and wailing and uttering plaintive cries of lamentation. For, as you must be well aware, many a keeper of the fast [*ṣāʿim*] will never keep another fast, and many a keeper of the vigil [*qāʿim*] will never keep vigil again.

The worker will be paid his wages, once he has finished his work, and we have now finished the work [required of us in the month of Ramaḍān]. But if only I knew for certain whether our fasting [*ṣiyām*] and our vigil [*qiyām*] have been accepted, or whether they will be used to slap us in our faces! If only I knew for certain which of us has been accepted, so that we may congratulate him, and which of us has been rejected, so that we may offer him our condolences!

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

There is many a one who keeps the fast by day, yet who gets nothing out of his fasting but hunger and thirst. And there is many a one who spends the night in vigil and prayer, yet who gets nothing from his vigil other than insomnia.



Peace be upon you, O month of daytime fasting!

*as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 'ṣ-ṣiyām*

Peace be upon you, O month of nighttime vigil!

*as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 'l-qiyām*

Peace be upon you, O month of true faith!

*as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 'l-īmān*

Peace be upon you, O month of the Qur'ān!

*as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 'l-Qur'ān*

Peace be upon you, O month of the radiant lights!

*as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 'l-anwār*

Peace be upon you, O month of forgiveness and pardon!

*as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 'l-maghfirati wa 'l-ghufrān*

Peace be upon you, O month of the ascending steps  
of Paradise and of salvation from the descending steps of Hell!

*as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 'd-darajāt wa 'n-najāti minā 'd-darakāt*

Peace be upon you, O month of the worshipful penitents!

*as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 't-tā'ibīna 'l-'ābidīn*

Peace be upon you, O month of those who know  
from spiritual experience!

*as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 'l-'ārifīn*

Peace be upon you, O month of those who exercise  
discriminating judgment!

*as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 'l-mujtahidīn*

Peace be upon you, O month of safety and security!

*as-salāmu 'alaik—yā shahra 'l-amān.*

You are a prison for disobedient sinners, and for the truly  
devout you are a place of comfort.

Peace be upon the lamps and lanterns that shine so bright! Peace be  
upon the sleepless eyes, and upon the streaming tears! Peace be upon  
the illuminated niches [*maḥārīb*] in the mosques, and upon the tears  
that are spilled and shed! Peace be upon the sighs that arise from hearts  
that are aflame!

O Allāh, include us among those whose fasting and prayers have been  
accepted, among those whose evil deeds You have transformed into  
good deeds, among those whom You have allowed by Your mercy to  
enter Your Gardens of Paradise, and among those whose degrees You  
have exalted, O Most Merciful of the merciful [*yā Arḥam ar-rāḥimīn*]!



<sup>200</sup> Job [Ayyūb] (peace be upon him) is mentioned several times in the Qur'ān, as a Prophet and an example of patience.

<sup>201</sup> Zacharias [Zakariyyā] is mentioned several times in the Qur'ān, where he is hailed as the father of John the Baptist [Yahyā] (peace be upon them both).

<sup>202</sup> Ezekiel [Ḥizqīl] (peace be upon him) is not mentioned by name in the Qur'ān, but the Qur'ānic commentators have identified an allusion to him therein, and he is frequently referred to in traditional reports. (See: Thomas Patrick Hughes, *op. cit.*, art. EZEKIEL, and *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, art. ḤIẒQĪL.)

<sup>203</sup> Although not mentioned by name in the Qur'ān, Joshua the son of Nūn [Yūsha' ibn Nūn] (peace be upon him) is identified by some Islamic authorities as the servant of Moses (peace be upon him), who is mentioned in Q. 18:60.

<sup>204</sup> In the original text, the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is able to express this much more neatly, by using the technical term of Arabic grammar: *bi-kasri 'l-lām*.

<sup>205</sup> The reading *ḥattā maṭli' i 'l-fajr* is a traditionally accepted alternative to *ḥattā maṭla' i 'l-fajr*. See, for instance, the celebrated Qur'ānic commentary called *Tafsīr al-Jalālain*, the first half of which was compiled by Shaikh Jalālu'd-dīn al-Maḥallī (d. A.H. 864), and the rest by Jalālu'd-dīn as-Suyūṭī (d. A.H. 911).

<sup>206</sup> In either case, according to the Qur'ānic commentary mentioned in note 205 above, the meaning is understood to be: "till the time of its rising [*ilā waqti tulū' i-hi*]." (Jalālu'd-dīn al-Maḥallī and Jalālu'd-dīn as-Suyūṭī. *Tafsīr al-Jalālain*. Istanbul: Salāh Bilici Kitabevi Yayınları, n.d.; pt. 2, p. 267.)

<sup>207</sup> Imām Mālik ibn Anas (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was the founder of one of the four schools [*madhāhib*] of Islamic jurisprudence. He died in the year A.H. 179/795 C.E.

<sup>208</sup> Imām Abū 'Abdi'llāh Muḥammad ibn Idrīs ash-Shāfi'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was the founder of one of the four schools [*madhāhib*] of Islamic jurisprudence. He died in the year A.H. 204/820 C.E. Imām al-Ghazālī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was one of the most notable professors of the Shāfi'ī school.

<sup>209</sup> See note 23 on p. 18 above.

<sup>210</sup> See note 192 on p. 98 above.

<sup>211</sup> Ubayy ibn Ka'b (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was one of the Companions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to whom particular editions of the text of the Qur'ān, prior to the authorization of 'Uthmān's version, have been ascribed. (See: *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, art. AL-KUR'ĀN.)

<sup>212</sup> Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was the founder of one of the four schools [*madhāhib*] of Islamic jurisprudence. He died in the year A.H. 241/855 C.E. The legal doctrines of the Ḥanbalī school were those studied most intensively by the author, Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) as a young man.

<sup>213</sup> This sentence refers to one of the rites of the Pilgrimage [Ḥajj]. (For a detailed account, see: Vol. 1, pp. 26–52.)

<sup>214</sup> The circumambulation [*ṭawāf*] of the House of Allāh [*Baitu'llāh*], i.e., the Ka'ba, is another rite of the Pilgrimage [Ḥajj].

<sup>215</sup> The seven seals [*khawāṭim*] mark the division of the Qur'ān into seven sections or stages [*manāzil*], an arrangement designed to facilitate the recitation of the entire Book in the course of a week.

<sup>216</sup> This is one of the many alternative titles sometimes given to what is most commonly known as the Opening Sūra [*Sūrat al-Fātiḥa*] of the Noble Qur'ān. It alludes to the first verse [*āya*] thereof, which reads: "Praise be to Allāh, Lord of All the Worlds [*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn*]."

<sup>217</sup> The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

The Qur'ān has been revealed according to seven dialects [*naẓala 'l-Qur'ānu 'alā sab'ati aḥruf*].

This has been interpreted to mean: "according to seven modes of reading or recitation." (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. H-R-F; also: *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, art. AL-KUR'ĀN; and: Thomas Patrick Hughes, *op. cit.*, art. SEVEN DIALECTS.)

<sup>218</sup> Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said in the Qur'ān (15:87):

We have given you seven  
of the oft-repeated [verses]  
and the mighty Qur'ān.

*wa la-qad ātainā-ka sab'an  
mīnā 'l-mathānī  
wa 'l-Qur'āna 'l-'aẓīm.*

According to some authorities, the seven *mathānī* are the oft-repeated verses [*āyāt*] of the Opening Sūra [*Sūrat al-Fātiḥa*] of the Qur'ān. Others maintain that the seven *mathānī* are the seven long Sūras from *Sūrat al-Baqara* to *Sūrat al-A'rāf*. (For yet other interpretations, see: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. TH-N-Y and art. S-B-'.)

<sup>219</sup> The names of the descending levels of Hell are as follows: (1) *Jahannam*, (2) *Laẓā* (3) *al-Ḥuṭama* (4) *Sa'ir* (5) *Saqar* (6) *al-Jahīm* (7) *Hāwīya*. All of these are mentioned in the Qur'ān, but the traditional commentators differ as to their order of descent.

<sup>220</sup> Their story is told in the Sūra of the Cave [*Sūrat al-Kahf*], the 18th Sūra of the Qur'ān. In the Christian tradition, they are known as the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus.

<sup>221</sup> The Prophet Hūd (peace be upon him) and a few righteous men were the only survivors.

<sup>222</sup> The total of seventeen is arrived at by adding together: (a) the two cycles of the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*], (b) the four cycles of the midday prayer [*ṣalāt az-ẓuhr*], (c) the four cycles of the afternoon prayer [*ṣalāt al-'aṣr*], (d) the three cycles of the sunset prayer [*ṣalāt al-maghrib*], and (e) the four cycles of the late evening prayer [*ṣalāt al-'ishā'*].

<sup>223</sup> As Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us in the Qur'ān (4:23):

Forbidden to you are  
your mothers,  
and your daughters,  
and your sisters,  
and your paternal aunts,  
and your maternal aunts,  
and your brother's daughters,  
and your sister's daughters.

*ḥarrimat 'alai-kum  
ummahātu-kum  
wa banātu-kum  
wa akhawātu-kum  
wa 'ammātu-kum  
wa khālātu-kum  
wa banātu 'l-akhi  
wa banātu 'l-ukhti.*

<sup>224</sup> In this category, it is forbidden for a man to marry: (1) his foster-mother, (2) his foster-sister, (3) his mother-in-law, (4) his daughter-in-law, (5) his stepdaughter, (6) the sister of a wife to whom he is still married, and (7) the widow or divorced wife of his father.

<sup>225</sup> The basic meaning of the term *ḥarf* (of which *ḥurūf* and *aḥruf* are plural forms) is "a letter of the Arabic alphabet." As in this context, however, it may also signify "a connected group of Arabic letters, representing either a separate word, or, in some cases, a grammatical combination of two or more elements, only one of which can normally be written separately."

<sup>226</sup> The twenty-seven elements counted as *ḥurūf* ['words'] are therefore the following:

(1) *innā* (2) *anzalnā-hu* (3) *fi* (4) *Lailati* (5) *'l-Qadr* (6) *wa* (7) *mā* (8) *adrā-ka* (9) *mā* (10) *Lailatu* (11) *'l-Qadr* (12) *Lailatu* (13) *'l-Qadr* (14) *khairun* (15) *min* (16) *alfi* (17) *shahr* (18) *tanazzalu* (19) *'l-malā'ikatu* (20) *wa* (21) *'r-Rūhu* (22) *fi-hā* (23) *bi-idhni* (24) *Rabbi-him* (25) *min* (26) *kulli* (27) *amr*.

<sup>237</sup> In Vol. 2, pp. 269–86, the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has quoted lengthy traditional reports concerning the Garden of Paradise.

<sup>238</sup> "In this world," to put it in simple English, "Friday comes but once a week, and always between Thursday and Saturday."

<sup>239</sup> Near the beginning of this subsection (p. 112 above), the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has ascribed to Abu 'l-Ḥasan at-Tamīmī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) a viewpoint that sets him somewhat apart from the other learned scholars.

<sup>240</sup> Even at the end of the 20th century, and even among the most technologically developed societies, eighty-three years and four months would represent an above-average span of life expectancy.

<sup>241</sup> As the reader can hardly fail to notice, few transmitting authorities—if any—are named in connection with these particular reports.

<sup>242</sup> See note 207 on p. 106 above.

<sup>243</sup> Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyib [or, al-Musayyab] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was an early scholar of Prophetic tradition. He died in A.H. 93. (There is some uncertainty as to the correct spelling of his last name. The forms *ibn al-Musayyib* and *ibn al-Musayyab* both occur, often in the same text.)

<sup>244</sup> **Author's note:** It is a recommended practice for the worshipper to recite the Sūra of Power [*Sīrat al-Qadr*] in the final late evening prayer [*'ishā'*] of the month of Ramaḍān.

<sup>245</sup> Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us in the Qur'ān:

Be careful to observe your prayers,  
and [especially] the middle prayer,  
and stand obedient to Allāh. (2:238)

*ḥafīẓū 'ala 'ṣ-ṣalawāti  
wa 'ṣ-ṣalāti 'l-wusṭā:  
wa qānū li'llāhi qānīn.*

\* \* \*

<sup>276</sup> In an earlier chapter of the present work, there is some evidence to suggest that Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used *kanīsa* to denote a church, and *bi'a* to denote a synagogue. (See Vol. 1, <sup>278</sup> See note 189 on p. 97 above. Arabic lexicographers, however, the term *bi'a* applies to a Christian church, and *kanīsa* to a Jewish synagogue. Yet others say that *kanīsa* may be applied to either of these, or that it means a place of worship used by the followers of any religion other than Islām.

<sup>277</sup> See p. 85 above, where the month of Ramaḍān is so described in a saying attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

<sup>278</sup> See note 189 on p. 97 above.